

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 NIC-01 DRC-01 /124 W

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R 030900Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2295

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSULATE DOUALA

LIMITED OFFICIAL US* YAOUNDE 0018

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CM, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH LOSE DEANSHIP OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS

1. DEC. 29 FRENCH AMBASSADOR AS DEAN PRESENTED TRADITIONAL NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS FROM DIPLOMATIC CORPS TO PRESIDENT AHIDJO. TOOK OCCASION TO OBSERVE THIS WOULD BE LAST TIME HONOR WOULD AUTOMATICALLY FALL TO A FRENCH AMBASSADOR.

2. IN HIS REPLY, AHIDJO ANNOUNCED THAT AS OF JANUARY 2 FRENCH AMBASSADOR NO LONGER TO BE DEAN BUT WOULD TAKE NORMAL PRECEDENCE WITHIN CORPS ACCORDING TO USUAL DIPLOMATIC USAGE, I.E., DATE OF PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS. AHIDJO EXPLAINED THAT THIS EVOLUTIONARY STEP TAKEN WITH AGREEMENT AND COMPREHENSION OF GOF AND IN NO WAY ALTERED FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES.

3. COMMENT. AS PART OF PROCESS OF REVISING COOPERATION AGREEMENTS, FRENCH HAD VOLUNTARILY OFFERED TO GIVE UP DEANSHIP SEVERAL MONTHS AGO BEFORE NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN. THIS IS SMALL CHANGE WHICH MEANINGFUL HOWEVER AS SYMBOL OF EVOLUTION SINCE TIME OF INDEPENDENCE IN 1960. INTERESTING QUESTION IS WHY AHIDJO CHOSE TO EFFECT IT PRIOR TO CONCLUSION OF PACKAGE OF NEW AGREEMENTS (PERHAPS BY NEXT MONTH) AND WHY CHANGE MIGHT NOT

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HAVE BEEN MADE EFFECTIVE CONCURRENT WITH EVENTUAL DEPARTURE OF

PRESENT FRENCH AMBASSADOR. IT POSSIBLE THAT AHIDJO WANTED TO
PUT PRESSURE ON FRENCH PRIOR TO FINAL STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS BY
SIGNALING IMPATIENCE OVER FRENCH UNWILLINGNESS SO FAR TO YIELD
TO CERTAIN IMPORTANT GEYC DEMANDS, AND TO DEMONSTRATE THAT CAM-
EROON BENT ON GOING AHEAD ONE WAY OR OTHER IN REASONABLY NEAR
FUTURE TO ACHIEVE NECESSARY NATIONAL AIMS.
MOORE

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